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MONGOOSE

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11 April 1962

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

SUBJECT: Meeting of Special Group (Augmented) on Operation  
Mongoose, 11 April 1962

PRESENT: General Taylor and Mr. Bundy; Mr. Rusk, Mr. Johnson and  
Mr. Martin; Mr. Kennedy; Mr. McNamara, Mr. Gilpatric,  
General Lemnitzer and General Lansdale; Mr. McCone,  
Mr. Helms and Mr. Harvey

(1)(A) [redacted] Colonel Davies and [redacted] Mr. Duval, of CIA, were also present. 01

1. General Lansdale gave a progress report.
2. Mr. McCone stated that there is little evidence from [redacted] photo reconnaissance of any significant increase in military support facilities, over those that existed during the Batista regime. He therefore questioned whether current estimates of the size of the Cuban military forces may not be somewhat exaggerated. In this connection, attention was called to the sizeable list of bloc materiel which has been provided to Cuba.

Mr. McNamara asked about evidences of underground installations, pointing out that should these exist in any significant numbers it would have a bearing on probable Cuban intentions and also on the difficulties of armed invasion of the island. He added that in any case, the difficulties can be expected to increase in the next one to five years.

Mr. Harvey reported on the interrogation of recent exfiltrates, with emphasis on their statements that some resistance elements exist in seven areas.

Answering Mr. Rusk's question, General Lemnitzer said that the U.S. has the capability of blockading Cuba completely. He added that the chiefs consider Cuba a threat to the U.S. and the Hemisphere now and in the future.

The following requests emerged from this discussion:

- a. Defense and CIA analysts should jointly consider all available evidence, particularly photographic, bearing on supporting military facilities, including any underground ones.

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b. A study should be made of the time and resources required to put a complete blockade into effect.

c. CIA should compile the numbers of individuals who are now traveling into Cuba from other countries in the Hemisphere.

d. Defense/JCS should examine the possibility of establishing "patrol posts" in the Caribbean, manned by personnel from one or several countries; particular attention should be given to the possibility of such an establishment, to be purely U.S., in Haiti, so as to guard against any invasion attempt of that country from Cuba.

3. Mr. McCone said that the current schedule of covert actions can be met, but he suggested that perhaps it should be speeded up even though this would entail increased dangers of attribution to the U.S. He added that the present restrictions on attribution present difficulties with respect to training agents and to supply missions. Mr. McCone also questioned whether complete success within the current covert framework would lead to the desired result.

Mr. Rusk urged that efforts be continued to explore the possibilities of defection or subversion of key individuals in the Castro regime, and that efforts be made to induct Cuban exiles into the U.S. armed forces. (Mr. McNamara agreed that the latter could and should be done.)

In answer to the Secretary of State's question as to the adequacy of existing policy approvals, General Lansdale said it would be useful to have approval to go further with infiltrated agents than restricting them to intelligence missions. It was agreed that, within the framework of present understandings, the numbers of personnel to be infiltrated could be stepped up. In this connection, it was noted however that it will be difficult if not impossible to maintain motivation and morale indefinitely, without at least the implied promise of eventual action by the U.S.

4. The Secretary of State said that, at this time, he can see no way in which an organized invasion of Cuba could be justified; on the other hand, this should not be taken as an excuse to cease activity against the Castro regime. He, supported by the Secretary of Defense, took the position that the U.S. should "play for the breaks," and should take necessary steps so as to get into a position which would afford the U.S. a maximum number of choices of action. In this connection, he and Mr. McNamara suggested that the current target

date for bringing covert operations to a climax should be removed. Mr. Bundy cautioned that this could lead to an uncontrollable action internally, which might come to a head at a time which would be embarrassing or inconvenient for the U.S. Mr. Rusk also urged that the security committee of the OAS be used as a vehicle to try to get more cooperation from Latin American countries, in the anti-Castro campaign.

5. In conclusion, Mr. Rusk asked that the program be revised to permit the building up of a wider range of eventual choices, and to effect the removal of any target date.

Thomas A. Parrott

No distribution, except  
General Lansdale - *cy destroyed 4/9/63 - mm*